

INQUIRY  
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# WHO KILLED JOHN PAISLEY?

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The CIA calls his death a suicide, but the evidence suggests that the former intelligence analyst was another casualty in the war over the Russian "mole" inside the CIA.

By JEFF GOLDBERG

**T**WENTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD Eddie Paisley works as a waiter at a Virginia bar and grill just outside of Washington, D.C. His 55-year-old father, an important CIA analyst, was found dead, floating in the Chesapeake Bay, one year ago. The authorities ruled he had committed suicide. Eddie Paisley believes his father was murdered. "Somebody is plugging the case up and trying to befuddle it as best they can," he says. "That's what it seems like to me. Obviously something's up, but the CIA doesn't want anyone to know about it." Eddie's father, John Arthur Paisley, left the CIA in 1974 after twenty-one years of service, for which he was decorated with the Distinguished Medal of Honor. Since 1969 he had been the deputy director of the CIA's Office of Strategic Research, the branch that deals with assessing Soviet nuclear capabilities. He was an important and respected expert on U.S. and Soviet atomic weapons and the CIA's computer and satellite systems. Since his "official" retirement five years ago, he had continued to work on top-secret agency projects as a \$200-a-day consultant—until he disappeared.

On Sunday, September 24, 1978,

JEFF GOLDBERG is codirector of the Washington-based Assassination Information Bureau.

Paisley sailed off from Lusby, Maryland, on his 31-foot sloop *Brillig* for a day on the bay. He was an expert sailor who loved the time he spent on his boat. He apparently planned to work alone that day, evaluating a sensitive CIA report on Soviet nuclear strength.

Late in the afternoon Paisley radioed ashore to friends to say he would be staying out late on the *Brillig*. He asked for the dock lights to be left on for him. It was the last time anyone is known to have heard from him.

The next morning the Coast Guard discovered the abandoned *Brillig* when a crab boat reported being almost hit by it. After boarding the boat, the Coast Guard quickly identified Paisley as its owner, and they noted the CIA documents in his briefcase. The CIA's security office was immediately notified.

After a delay of some twelve hours, the CIA called Maryann Paisley at her McLean, Virginia, home. The Paisleys had separated a year earlier after twenty-five years of marriage and he had just recently moved into a new apartment in downtown Washington. Maryann Paisley had herself worked for the CIA in 1974 as a contract employee and was still bound by the agency's security oath. She understood the CIA's concern for securing his sensitive papers, so late that night she drove out to the Maryland

Diane, and CIA officials. They searched the *Brillig*, but apparently removed nothing. However, there were indications that other CIA security representatives had already been there, because Paisley's sophisticated radio gear (antennas and transmitters) were gone.

The next morning, Maryann Paisley sent her son Eddie to check his father's apartment. He discovered the apartment had already been entered—papers were in disarray and a camera, tape recordings, and a Rolodex were missing. Some nine-millimeter bullets were strewn on a closet floor. It was later determined that CIA representatives had already been there also. The police later complained that these searches had contaminated much of the evidence.

At this point there was no trace of Paisley. Since he was a strong swimmer, his family hoped he was still alive on one of the bay's small islands. The Coast Guard made a helicopter and boat search of the area, but there was no police investigation because a missing-person report had not been filed. For a week Paisley's disappearance went publicly unreported.

Then on October 1, a bloated, badly decomposed body was pulled from the bay several miles from where the *Brillig* had run aground. The victim, shot once